VIEWING THE WORLD AS AN ORGANISM

WORLD ORDER

NOVEMBER 1937

THE LABORATORY OF LIFE . . . LOUISE D. BOYLE

CULTURAL UNITY OF THE EAST . . . V. B. METTA

THE TYPES OF CHARACTER . . . 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

THE DIVINE EDUCATOR . . . ALICE SIMMONS COX

REVELATION . . . . BERTHA HYDE KIRKPATRICK

PRICE 20¢

Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

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Change of address should be reported one month in advance.

WORLD ORDER is published monthly in New York, N. Y., by the Publishing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of the United States and Canada. EDITORS: Stanwood Cobb, Marjory Morten and Horace Holley. BUSINESS MANAGER: C. R. Wood. PUBLICATION OFFICE: 135 East 50th Street, New York, N. Y. EDITORIAL OFFICE: 119 Waverly Place, New York, N. Y.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: $2.00 per year, $1.75 to Public Libraries. Rate to addresses outside the United States, $2.25, foreign Library rate, $2.00, Single copies, 20 cents. Checks and money orders should be made payable to World Order Magazine, 135 East 50th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class matter, May 1, 1935, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Contents copyrighted 1937 by BAHA'I PUBLISHING COMMITTEE.

November 1937, Volume 3, Number 8.

WORLD ORDER

Title registered at U. S. Patent Office

NOVEMBER, 1937, VOLUME THREE, NUMBER EIGHT

EDUCATION GOES AHEAD

EDITORIAL

THE most cheerful news one can find to center the mind upon in this year of war and war-dreads is the educational progress taking place in this country, as announced by the United States Office of Education in giving forth figures for school enrollment of the current year. Elementary schools, it is expected, will enroll about 22,500,000 pupils, high schools approximately 6,500,000, and universities about 1,250,000. All other schools will enroll about 2,750,000.

This means that actually one quarter of our population is attending educational institutions. When we add to these figures the amount of adult education going on in one form or other, we may rightly say of America that it is a nation-at-school. We heed in a nation-wide way the exhortation of Soloman: "Seek wisdom . . ." Whether we complete his advice "and pursue it," is another matter.

The most significant increase is in the field of secondary education, in which enrollment is larger than it has ever been in the history of our nation. The depression, by lessening opportunities for work and economic gain on the part of youth, has caused an amazing increase in high school enrollment. The figures for this year show an increase of 1,735,000 in high schools as over the year 1929-30. This steady increase in high school enrollment is due not only to the depression, however. It has been going on

for the last fifty years and constitutes an educational and sociological phenomenon of significant import to American culture. High school enrollments have virtually doubled every ten years since 1890, when it was 203,000 (college enrollment today is six times as great!). Today secondary education is universally desired, and thirty-three per cent of the nation's adult population have at least entered high school.

This spread of secondary education throughout the country has produced tremendous results along cultural and economic lines. It is responsible for a higher and more subtle psychology in the American moire than in other countries; for widespread reading habits make possible huge circulations of popular magazines; for an advertising set-up which quickly universalizes new products, inventions. These, and many other implications, result from the American educational scheme.

EDUCATION has taken hold of Americans with a fervor which seems to increase almost in direct proportion to the falling off of religious zeal. In fact, education may be said to be the American religion. It does far more to influence the development of youth than does the church. It includes in its program the gospel of health, and the gospel of character.

It is in this latter, and highly important aim, that education most fails. If one stands at the portals of any city high school and studies the faces and manners of the young people of both sexes pouring forth, one may entertain grave doubts as to the quality of character-building inherent in the schools' program. In fact, one may even question whether the promiscuous coming together of youth of every type in such large numbers in an atmosphere and environment wholly devoid of the wholesome restraints of religion, does not serve to indoctrinate by means of mass-psychology the less rather than the more noble human qualities.

Certainly education is in a serious dilemma in this country as regards its character-product. Perhaps educational leaders will awaken some day to the great and inpregnable truth, that to seek to make character without utilizing the factor of religion is like making bricks without straw.

Even such a realization, however, could accomplish little in our public educational system. For here religion, by the very nature of our government and culture, is tabooed.

What is the solution to this problem of youth and its training, a problem which grows more desperate with each passing year? If the American pattern forbids religion to enter into education, and this spiritual lack in our youth becomes catastrophic, will not a change be forced upon this pattern? A change which will eventually restore the spiritual factor to education?

S. C.

THE LABORATORY OF LIFE

LOUISE D. BOYLE

THERE would seem no longer room for doubt concerning the reconciliation of religion and science in view of the developments in science during the present century. Indeed the interpretations of these developments by scientists themselves would appear to establish the fact, enabling us to glimpse a renaissance in human thought and a new spiritual freedom for man through these remarkable discoveries.

There was never an essential cleavage. Religion and science were always one—in the search for truth by faith. The scientist, like the Bahá'í, rejects the human increment obscuring the reality of religion. As we know today, a negative equation established an apparent cleavage—the reaction of the scientific mind to ecclesiasticism in the Middle Ages.

Yet in the contemplative life of the scholastic period the fountains of thought were fed from the source of true religion and gave rise eventually to Experimental Science, the spirit of "positive" research, so clearly the quest for fundamental truth. And the tremendous principle of evolution, appearing as a final point of cleavage, may be seen today more truly as the cap-stone of an arch, leading over into the Age of Reconciliation.

Some years ago a group of the distinguished leaders in science and religion issued a brief outline of the common ground on which they met—a statement broadly suggestive of the Bahá'í Teaching:

"It is a sublime conception of God which is furnished by science, and one wholly consonant with the highest ideals of religion, when it represents Him as revealed through countless ages in developing the earth as an abode for man and in the age-long inbreathing of life into its constituent matter, culminating in man with his spiritual nature and all his God-like powers."[1]

Today the astonishing fact stands out that the emphasis in science has changed since the rise of Bahá'u'lláh—the materialistic trend has been reversed. We are witnessing a new movement in scientific thought, based upon experimental science and mathematics. That such fundamental discoveries in the universe of matter, life and mind should have appeared almost simultaneously in the early Twentieth Century is declared by Hurst, the eminent British biologist, as "a remarkable coincidence amounting almost to a miracle of thought."[2]

The development of pure mathematics has enabled Einstein to ex-

1—Professor R. A. Millikan and Bishop F. J. McConnell were of this group. Quoted by Dr. A. H. Compton, Freedom of Man, p. 115.

2—Heredity & the Ascent of Man, C. C. Hurst, Pr.D., Sc.D., p. 115.

pound his original views of the relativity of the universe — conceptions far more revolutionary than were those of Newton in his time. The discovery of the electron and proton has changed our knowledge of the fundamental basis of matter, which is seen no longer as inert substance but as materialization of energy. The experimental behavior of the electron has led to the establishment of a new principle in physics—the principle of indeterminacy, changing the old Causation Law, the basis of former materialistic concepts.

The new law is conceived as validating "something in the inorganic" analogous to free-will in the higher reaches of the organic, as suggesting spontaneity or consciousness at the core of life. Thus, in being pledged no longer to a deterministic law, science begins to see the universe in its relation to a Supreme Creator, and approaches the Bahá'í concept of Primal Will as first cause. Since order and design in nature presume intelligence, the world-process is interpreted as the outworking of an Infinite Intelligence.

The new principle of indeterminacy is proven by the Quantum Theory of Planck, the essence of which is the introduction of "a new and universal constant, namely the elementary Quantum of Action. It was this constant," writes Planck, "which like a new and mysterious messenger from the real world, insisted on turning upside-down every measurement." The Theory of Relativity is described by Planck as, in a word, "the fusion of time and space in one unitary concept."[3] The human mind now probes beyond space-time.

Thus a New Philosophy of Physics has been born. And such new knowledge has enabled the philosophers in science to propose entirely new conceptions of the nature and origin of the universe. Sir James Jeans shows us a universe of thought, and pictures its creation as an act of thought, set in time and space. He writes:

"The river of knowledge has made a sharp bend in the last few years. Thirty years ago we thought, or assumed, that we were heading toward an ultimate reality of a mechanical kind. . . . Today there is a wide measure of agreement . . . that the stream of knowledge is heading toward a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine.

"Mind appears no longer as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter—not of course our individual minds, but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts."[4]

In defining the world of Physics and introducing his new Quantum Theory Dr. Planck reveals to us the spirit of the modern physicist:

"Physics is an exact Science and all the ideas employed in it are derived from the world of sense perception. Many scientists and philosophers believe from this that at bottom Physics is concerned exclusively with this particular world—the world of man's senses. This cannot be refuted by logic since logic itself cannot lead beyond the confines of our own senses.

3—Universe in the Light of Modern Physics, Dr. Max Planck, Univ. Berlin, p. 20.
4—Mysterious Universe, Sir James Jeans, pp. 147-8.

"In Physics as in every other science common sense alone is not supreme; there must also be a place for Reason. Reason tells us that if we turn our backs on an object, the object still continues to exist. Also that man, and mankind as a whole, together with the entire world of our senses, is no more than a tiny fragment in the vastness of nature, whose laws are in no way affected by any human brain. They existed long before there was any life on earth, and will continue to exist long after the last physicist has perished.

"It is considerations of this kind, and not any logical argument, that compel us to assume the existence of another world of reality behind the world of the senses; a world which has existence independent of man, and which can only be perceived indirectly through the medium of the world of the senses, and by means of certain symbols which our senses allow us to apprehend. . . . But besides the world of sense and the real world, there is the world of Physics. It differs from the other two because it is a deliberate hypothesis put forward by a finite human mind; and as such it is subject to change and to a kind of evolution. . . ."

Dr. Planck concludes his Introduction with the statement that the goal of Physics, although theoretically unobtainable, is "the apprehension of true reality."

"Modern Physics," he declares, "impresses us particularly with the truth of the old doctrine which teaches that there are realities existing apart from our sense-perceptions and that there are problems and conflicts where these realities are of greater values for us than the richest treasures of the world of experience."[5]

The question of free-will—whether or not man is responsible for his actions as a free agent—has been a fundamental problem in religion, philosophy and science since Pythagoras discovered the precision of nature's laws and taught a doctrine harmonizing human life and conduct with them.

If our actions are the outcome of past history, the atoms of our bodies following an unchanging law of cause and effect, responsibility ceases and the basis of morality disappears. Religion has taught responsibility to God; philosophy has offered no rational proof of freedom, while science has hitherto affirmed the physical determination of man's actions.

That a new spirit has been felt in science may be recognized from the words of Dr. Arthur H. Compton, winner of the Nobel Prize for his contribution to the New Physics:

"Not only the physical and biological sciences, but to a large extent psychology as well, have made great strides in interpreting nature on the basis of mechanical laws involving cause and effect. The motions of planets, the flight of airplanes, the swing of pendulums, are nicely described in terms of well-established laws of motion. . . .

"Yet is it possible in terms of the motion of atoms to explain how men can invent an electric motor or design and build a great cathedral? If such achievements represent anything more than the requirements of physical law, it means that science must

5—Idem, p. 107.

investigate the additional controlling factors, whatever they may be. . . . For a science which describes only the motions of inanimate things but fails to include the actions of living organisms cannot claim universality. If man's actions are not determined by physical law it becomes a vital question for science to find whether his actions are determined, and, if so, by what factors."[6]

The development and general acceptance of the principle of uncertainty in physics during the past ten years would seem the answer to this new quest in science. Dr. Compton continues:

"Natural phenomena do not obey exact laws. This statement marks perhaps the most significant revolution in the history of scientific thought. . . . Has science, with its continual searching of fundamentals finally undermined its own foundations? Or is it possible that under the new physics a more adequate picture of the world can be drawn, one in which purpose is effective and life again has human meaning?"

In brief, today, "Man is left by science in control of his own actions within the bounds set by natural law. . . . Instead of removing the foundation of morality, science now presents new reasons why men should discipline their lives and supplies new means whereby they can make their world more perfect.

"It is possible to see the whole great drama of evolution as moving toward the goal of the making of persons, with free, intelligent wills, capable of learning nature's laws, of seeing dimly God's purpose in nature, and of working with him to make that purpose effective."[7]

Side by side with these developments, so fundamental in their significance for man, new concepts of the individual, of life and the mechanics of evolution have emerged through the discovery of the *gene* by Mendel.

During the past thirty years, through millions of experiments in plants, the higher animals and Man, the new science of Genetics in biology has been established as an exact science. The gene has been shown as the "prime unit" and basis of life, the determiner of individuality, the foundation of human thought and action. Genetical experiments in the realm of mind have revolutionized all the former concepts of psychology. Clearly such an advance is capable of drawing in its wake a lengthy evolution of thought.

Although the Austrian abbot Mendel died without recognition of his genius and his original papers were lost, they were restored to science at the turn of the present century after others had labored in his field, and a great truth, beautiful in its simplicity, is associated with his name.

Muhammad ascribes glory to Him "Who created all the sexual pairs, of that which the earth groweth, and of themselves, and of that which they know not."[8]

Mendel discovered that the characters of organisms are controlled by definite units (which he called factors), one-half of which are directly inherited from the mother parent and the other half from the father; that these are single, independent units

6—Idem, Freedom of Man, pp. 2, 3.
7—Idem, pp. 7, 66, 115.
8—Glorious Koran, XXVI, v, 35.

which remain absolutely pure and unadulterated no matter how they may be mixed in breeding; that *in the germinal cell* of the organism they *form up in pairs.* (That some of the genes are dominant and some recessive is a secondary principle: they are divided equally in the germinal cell.)

"In the higher organisms, and in Man," writes Hurst, "every growing cell carries a complete complex of genes which organizes and controls the development and expression of the individual personality. In Man the individual gene complex is composed of 48 distinct groups of genes known as chromosomes, 24 of which are directly derived from the egg-cell of the mother parent and 24 from the sperm-cell of the father."[9]

The gene itself is so minute that it cannot be seen even by the highest powered ultra-microscopes, yet countless experiments have proved its presence and its positions in the chromosomes. With regard to the nature of the gene, Hurst writes:

"It is inferred that the gene is a physico-chemical structure of minute size. These particles are by experimental inference molecules (or more or less complex combinations of atoms), but different from ordinary molecules . . . the genes may be regarded as auto-catalysts. Since these genic molecules give rise to different reactions it may be inferred that each one must be of different constitution and structure . . . it is clearly evident that they were concerned directly with the first origin of life. . . .

"Recent genetical research leads us to the inevitable conclusion that, in general, living genes are relatively immortal. The original protogene of a thousand million years ago may not be alive to-day, but since every gene is a part of a previous gene we can safely say that all the thousands of millions of genes in existence to-day are parts of the progenes of a thousand million years ago and of the original protogenes. We can also safely predict that all the genes in existence a thousand million years hence or more will be parts of the genes of to-day and the progenes of long ago . . . a close approximation to immortality."[10]

Writes Dr. Arthur H. Compton: "Biologically speaking, life, whether it be an apple seed or the germ cell of a man, is essentially continuous and eternal . . . there is continuity of life in the cells. . . . May we not also logically say that continuity of consciousness, mind or soul may be presumed from the essential eternality of the germ cell?"[11]

Just as physics has attained another level in its adaptation to new knowledge, so biology is elevated through a new perception of reality. In disclosing the germinal cell as the real laboratory of life, the discovery of Mendel alters essentially the mechanics of evolution, and reveals to the scientific world an entirely new conception of the individual. In transferring the direction of research, the concept of the individual is returned to its fundamental aspect—to the characteristics of the individual.

In the light of this discovery the mystery of life recedes from developed forms to a sphere relatively apart from matter, in which the individual in developing obeys and fulfils

9—Idem, p. 111.
10—Idem, pp. 32-5, 131.
11—Washington Star, Apr. 12, 1936.

the germinal potentialities. Since the problem of heredity, the complex transmission of characteristics, rests wholly with the germinal cells, the individual body becomes nothing more than a "temporary expression" of those germinal characteristics which have united to give it consistency and form. The individual may not be interpreted through himself alone but through the history of his family; and the characteristics which he may transmit are not those of his own body but of his origin.

This conception of the individual now appears in the scientific world as new and revolutionary. In Bahá'í thought, however, "the outworking of the qualities" is a familiar principle; its discovery lifts the science of Man to the plane of reality, in the Bahá'í view. In his Teaching concerning Love as the creative principle 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains this subject clearly in throwing light upon the process of evolution.

"Love is an outpour from God and is pure spirit. . . . It is the immediate cause of the laws which govern nature, the endless verities of nature which science has uncovered. . . . This Manifestation of God is active, creative, spiritual. It reflects the positive aspect of God. There is another Manifestation of God which is characterized by passivity, quiescence, inactivity. . . . This Manifestation is matter. Matter, reflecting the negative aspect of God, is self-existent, eternal, and fills all space.

"Spirit, flowing out from God, permeates all matter . . . impresses its nature upon the atoms and elements. By its power they are attracted to each other under certain ordered relations, and thus, uniting and continuing to unite, give birth to worlds and systems of worlds. The same laws working under developed conditions bring into existence living beings. Spirit is the life of the form and the form is shaped by the spirit. The powers of spirit are evolved by the experiences of the form, and the plasticity of the matter of the form is developed by the activity of the spirit. . . .

"The forms or bodies of component parts, infinite in variety, which in the course of evolution spirit builds as the vehicle of its expression are, because of the instability of matter, subject to dissolution. As they disappear others are built following the same patterns, carrying on the characteristics of each. . . . Similar types recur again and again. . . . So flowers and fruits come this year from like seed or from the same bush or tree as those of last year, each in the line of succession of its kind, the same in essence, but differing in substance. . . .

"Through these successive evolutionary steps spirit develops characters having divine attributes. The positive, creative aspect of God is reflected in them. Individuality is derived from expression in individual form. Self-consciousness accompanies individualized character, and the being thus endowed has the potentiality of rising to the knowledge of God. . . ."[12]

But perhaps the most important development of the present century is the synthesis achieved by science in the expansion of these discoveries. All the major sciences now converge in one, as though to create a science

12—God and the Universe, Bahá'í Scriptures.

of another order through the study of radiant energy or light.

Planck tells us: "According to the modern view there are no more than two ultimate substances, namely positive and negative electricity."[13] Jeans writes: "Matter proves to be nothing more than a collection of particles charged with electricity. With one turn of the kaleidoscope all the sciences which deal with the properties and structure of matter have become ramifications of the single science of electricity."[14]

And showing us that the three major conservation laws—those of matter, mass and energy, now reduce to one, Jeans says:

"One simple fundamental entity which may take many forms, matter and radiation in particular, is conserved through all changes; the sum total of this entity forms the whole activity of the universe, which does not change its total quantity. But it continually changes its quality . . . forever the tangible changes into the intangible. . . . These concepts reduce the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of its creation can be told with perfect accuracy and completeness in the six words: 'God said, Let there be Light!'"[15]

We have long known that the radiant influence of light nourishes life. We know today that within the human body light forms the basis of consciousness. For centuries man has concentrated his genius upon the study of inanimate matter. The idea now converges in many minds that in the study of light, science approaches the problem of life itself. Indeed science now seeks the mysterious law by which light, life and mind are bound-up together.

James Young Simpson, Professor of Natural Science at the University of Edinburg, writes: "The suspicion that there is 'an organic category' more fundamental and inclusive than anything subsumed under the inorganic, slowly gains ground. . . . If this last dualism is to be resolved, the probabilities are that the resolution will be in the direction of the priority of creative mind. . . .

"We are in the midst of a movement in thought comparable to one of the 'major revolutions' of the geologists—those movements of upheaval of land masses and continental areas which mark off the end of one secular aeon and the beginning of another. The days in which we live are truly days of revelation. We stand upon the threshold of amazing discoveries."[16]

Thus from its own field science discerns the dawning Era. From the Mount of Vision and inspired research one Voice declares the millennial Age. In contemplating the truths of religion and science it is significant to realize that fundamental concepts in both realism of modern science—the universe and man—are now based upon invisible realities, the electron and the gene.

Nothing is more characteristic of the changing order than the new attitude on the part of science. Before the miracles of modern thought its affirmations hold a new humility. Having identified the world-process with Mind and resolved analysis into synthesis, the principle of Life, may

13—Idem, p. 16.
14—Idem, p. 32.
15—Idem, pp. 73-8.
16—Nature: Cosmic, Human & Divine, pp. 117, 3, 154.

not science yet recall the familiar words to ponder them anew — "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men?"[17]

Surely, looking backward in the future, the present century must be seen as the beginning of the period described by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and associated in His thought with universal peace—the discovery of the "new and hidden sciences," to revolutionize all the conditions of existence. The new body of thought which attends the rising of the Prophet provides at once the proof of His validity and the interpretation of His Teaching.

In the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, inscribed more than fifty years ago, we find these words: "The worlds were formed through the force emanating from the reaction of the active and passive principle; although the worlds are always the same, nevertheless they change constantly. . . . Verily the actor and the acted upon were created by the unresisted Word of God, which is indeed the cause of creation, and aught beside His Word was created and caused. . . . Then know that the Word of God (exalted and glorified be He!), is far superior to what is comprehended by the senses; because it does not belong to the nature nor essence, rather it is sanctified from the known elements. . . . It became manifest without an utterance made, or a voice breathed. It is the command of God, the protector against all the worlds.

"Nature is the manifestation of the Will of God in the apparent world. Verily it is the preordination on the part of One, the predestinator and omniscient. Should it be said that nature is the Divine Primal Will manifested in the created world, no one has the right to object to that, for a great power is ordained therein of which the limit and essence could not be comprehended by the people of the world. Verily, the clear-sighted cannot see in it aught save the transfiguration of My Name, the Creator. Say, this is a state to which corruption has no access. This is a being which made nature confounded regarding His appearance, His proofs and His effulgence which encompassed the world. . . ."[18]

"Regard thou the one true God as One Who is apart from, and immeasurably exalted above, all created things. The whole universe reflecteth His glory, while He is Himself independent of, and transcendeth His creatures. This is the true meaning of Divine Unity. He Who is the Eternal Truth is the one Power Who exerciseth undisputed sovereignty over the world of being, Whose image is reflected in the mirror of the entire creation. All existence is dependent on Him, and from Him is derived the source of the sustenance of all things. . . ."[19]

"All things, in their inmost reality, testify to the revelation of the names and attributes of God within them. Each according to its capacity indicateth, and is expressive of, the knowledge of God. So potent and universal is this revelation that it hath encompassed all things visible and invisible. . . . in the tradition of Kumayl it is written: 'Behold, a light hath shone forth out of the morn of eternity, and lo, its waves have penetrated the inmost reality of all men.' Man, the

17—John 1, v.4.
18—Tablet of Wisdom.
19—Gleanings, p. 166.

noblest and most perfect of all created things, excelleth them all in the intensity of this revelation, and is a fuller expression of its glory. And of all men, the most accomplished, the most distinguished, and the most excellent are the Manifestations of the Sun of Truth. Nay, all else besides these Manifestations live by the operation of their Will, and move and have their being through the outpouring of their grace. . . ."

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth is a direct evidence of the revelation within it of the attributes and names of God, inasmuch as within every atom are enshrined the signs that bear eloquent testimony to the revelation of that Most Great Light. . . . How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop. To a supreme degree is this true of Man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and names of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed. . . ."[20]

". . . I beg of God to manifest His Cause in all countries, and that the servants may attain such a position that He may explain to them that which He desires, without veiling or concealment: that He may teach them the wonders of His knowledge. . . ."[21]

20—Gleanings, pp. 177-8-9.

21—Tablet of Manifestation.

THE NEW CREATION

ALICE SIMMONS COX

V. THE DIVINE EDUCATOR

"He who believes today in this new creation and beholds the impregnable Truth as being the guardian and protector over it, verily he is of the people of vision. . . . Walk above the world by the power of the Greatest Name that thou mayest see the secrets of pre-existence and know that which none know of."—BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

How much can man learn concerning the mysteries of life? Is there any realm of knowledge beyond the capacity of human understanding?

How far will innate desire influence the human mind in its search for truth?

Of what importance are such questions to the individual man and to the development of his world society?

Modern scientific and philosophic wisdom does not hold a direct and certain answer to any one of these queries. Admittedly each touches the fringe of the Infinite of which no man can speak with assurance as a result of intellectual discovery. Bahá'u'lláh, we have seen, states that man can never know God until illumined by His Spirit of Love revealed through a Prophet, that man can never understand himself or the process of creative evolution until he has been educated for rebirth into the higher world of Divine spiritual influence.

Scientific men, by the exercise of human intellectual powers, have attempted to make suggestive answers to questions that touch the deepest mysteries of creation. They do draw tentative conclusions. Science has not gone so far, however, as to consider the matter of the reality of the station of Prophethood. It does not recognize the truth of Manifestation, but neither does it reject or deny. In order to be consistent with its own spirit of open-minded search, it can never be dogmatic. All mystery it must continue to view as truths to unveil if possible, but when still undiscovered to see them as recordings, not on the chart of the Unknowable or of the non-Existent, but of the Unknown. In this light all known facts must appear as but relative truths in respect to that Unknown.

This attitude of relative uncertainty

a scientific mind must take prior to its recognition of the truth of Divine Revelation. Not only this. It is the view that science must take if the way is to be left free for continued search of the secrets of creation. Strangely, also, it may seem, it is the attitude that instils in the human heart a higher reverence and a more sincere worship than can any religion that is but dogma and creed. Like the Athenians of old, the scientifically-thinking man of today does not confine himself to reverence for tradition and accepted knowledge, old dieties that may or may not be virtuous, but places on his acropolis with scientific truth a deep consciousness of the Unknown God, those encompassing Forces of life before which he must stand in finite wonder and awe. If such wonder is sincere, the yearning to know God, implanted in every human breast, can never be stilled as long as He remains Unknown, and the mind will never find stagnation in sloughs of creating its own false God.

Modern reason usually disclaims intention of seeking ultimate truth in any realm of investigation, however. This viewpoint, which has grown more and more firmly established with the realization that in any given case the factors of influence appear to be infinite in number, is further strengthened by the belief, paradoxically, that one absolute truth has been found: that, as Locke held, "The real essence of substances is forever unknowable." Science in general thus proceeds on the theory that it can study only the manifestations of essence, and that, furthermore, human reason can go no further in any sphere of investigation. "We can only progress by discovering the laws which govern the changes of substances and so produce the phenomena of the external world," states Jeans.[1] This conviction, without consciousness of the reality of Manifestation of the Word of God, tends to rob the achievements of experience of hope of a final crown, and places a definite limit on a process of search that must be conceived as carrying on in the spirit, although without the belief that truth can be always progressively, if not ultimately unveiled. Modern science does not recognize that rational search, motivated by innate desire, approaches more and more the nature of a quest for certitude. It may even disregard, because not fully understood, that element of the human soul which seems to be a crying need for assurance.

Men of religion, in their endeavor to be scientific in their thinking, are being strongly influenced by this outlook of science, particularly if they find themselves helpless to discover in scriptural sources any acceptable proofs of Prophethood or any convincing statements concerning the absolute Divinity of God that will withstand the attacks of higher rational criticism. The tendency of such thinkers is to disbelieve in assertions concerning levels of consciousness referred to as Nirvana, the Kingdom, paradise, and to discredit belief in the Holy Spirit and the special Divinity of such leaders as Moses, Jesus or Buddha, wherein traditional religion finds its pristine assurance.

(To present the proofs of Prophetic station anew, attired in modern

1—The Mysterious Universe, p. 139.

expression of thought, is one mission of Bahá'u'lláh. It is desirable, He declares, that all men should use their capacity for reasoning to seek and examine such proofs. Then at last will it be possible for the rational spirit of science and the reverential spirit of religion to find common ground in a creative unity of faith born of understanding. Not alone does Bahá'u'lláh precede His Revelation of Truth by awakening, or re-awakening, in hearts a desire to find Divine Certitude. He also makes the revelation of Truth appear reasonable through presentation in a form that may be called ultimate in respect to the day of the Revelation. In this manner He removes impediments of both lassitude and preconception from the souls of men and directs them to a consideration of His Word.)

SINCE pure science is an index of the great heights to which the human intellect has risen, the word which it has to say of its own search for the realities of life offers an appropriate, interesting and tangible starting point from which we may build more detailed thought concerning the questions presented in the introduction.

Morality, emotion and esthetic appreciation have not been discovered in mathematical study of the cosmos, nor from interpretations of results, the same writer observes. A fellow-countryman of his, however, uses the avenue of philosophical reasoning based on biological and social science to find these attributes in the universe:

"God's existence," says J. S. Haldane, "Cannot be regarded as depending on man's existence, although it is in man's existence, that God's existence is revealed to man. We can imagine a time when no human beings or organisms of comparable development existed, or when beings of greatly superior development will exist, in whom God's existence will appear much more fully. But we know enough at present to be sure that in existence in any form, God must be manifested as all-embracing personality, and that the course of evolution must represent a more and more detailed divine manifestation. Apart from God's existence as living and active, existence has no ultimate meaning. . . . The conception of truth, whether relative or ultimate, presupposes a world of one personality. . . . The authority with which the search for final truth appeals is therefore a manifestation in us of personality embracing all individual personalities, and rendering a partial interpretation of our experiences fundamentally consistent with one another. This is what we refer to when we speak, in a language of religion, of divine truth, and use the word God to designate the all-embracing personality in whose existence ultimate reality exists. . . . Our universe is the progressive manifestation of God."[2]

Truth, goodness and beauty are active manifestations of "the personality of God," Haldane believes. From his viewpoint,—that of human reason seeking God in the expressions of His power on all levels of mineral, plant, animal and human life,—he agrees with many advanced thinkers that "the conception of a completely in-

2—The Philosophy of a Biologist, pp. 141-4, 116, 117.

telligible or perfect universe or God turns out to be meaningless, since it is only in the presence of what remains imperfect and unintelligible that the attributes of God as personal and active manifest themselves."[3] Man cannot comprehend complete perfection.

If we disregard the points of difference in these interpretations cited, such as a tendency toward pantheism on one hand or a belief in an entirely objective God on the other, and look for the points of similarity, there will appear several, each remarkably like the inspirational concepts of creative artists or the teachings of the Prophets of God. If the roads to truth are many they should, according to the reason of the metaphor here used, emerge from the forest of search at a point common to all, the final goal of each endeavor, if there is such a goal. That there is, is the primary teaching of all divine Manifestations of God from Abraham to Bahá'u'lláh. Modern thought, backed by scientific method, has already accomplished miracles in dissolving religious conceptions that were nothing but superstition; while on the other hand religious spirit in its purity of reverence, humility, renunciation and yearning for authority has done much to permeate the attitude of the laboratory. It is scarcely conceivable that science can give the same service as religion, but is becoming apparent that in each field there is special and needed service to be rendered, the goal being the discovery of the laws of life and the evolution of creation on more rapid scale through conscious and wise application of those laws. Truths found in each realm cannot be contradictory, but will be supplementary when the spirit of man seeks passionately, fervidly, devotedly with every resource of his being.

Two of the points of similarity in the foregoing quotations may be noted: 1. Belief in the existence of God. 2. Certainty that God can be known only through His evidences in the created world.

From this viewpoint the mind is forced to the conclusion that God may be transcendent, of attributes in quality surpassing those of creation, yet we cannot with honesty claim to have any conception of His Perfection. If we expand the statement of Bertrand Russell to include all methods of rational discovery, "What science cannot discover, mankind cannot know," it would seem as an evident truth. If we try to reason by any line of argument, from any premise or factors, that God is All-Powerful, All-Knowing, All-Merciful, All-Forgiving, we will invariably find ourselves in a maze of speculation. The finite mind of man could not recognize Infinite Knowledge if it were before him. Does this mean God is not Infinite? Perfect? Human reason must reply that it cannot know.

The scientific method can prove the existence of God. It cannot find Him. Certain attributes do suggest themselves as reflections of the Creator, but in their finite emanation they do not appear as signs of an Omnipotent, Loving Spirit, such as religion claims to reveal, and the human heart, if untouched by false learning, longs to know.

Bahá'u'lláh, when He gave His

3—p. 135.

Message to the world in the last century, emphasized the truth of this real barrier in the path of man's search. "There are certain limits which no human being can possibly transgress," He explained. "Every attempt which, from the beginning that hath no beginning, hath been made to visualize and know God is limited by the exigencies of His own creation—a creation which He, through the operation of His own Will and for the purposes of none other but His own Self, hath called into being. Immeasurably exalted is He above the strivings of human mind to grasp His Essence, or of human tongue to describe His mystery. No tie of direct intercourse can ever bind Him to the things He hath created, nor can the most abstruse and most remote allusions of His creatures do justice to His being. Through His world-pervading Will He hath brought into being all created things. He is and hath ever been veiled in the ancient eternity of His own exalted and indivisible Essence, and will everlastingly continue to remain in His inaccessible majesty and glory. All that is in heaven and all that is in the earth have come to exist at His bidding, and by His Will all have stepped out of utter nothingness into the realm of being. How can, therefore, the creature which the Word of God hath fashioned comprehend the nature of Him Who is the Ancient of Days?"[4]

And yet—Bahá'u'lláh also declares another truth: Man must seek and find God. "The beginning of all things is a knowledge of God, and the end of all things is strict observance of whatsoever hath been sent down from the empyrean of the Divine Will that pervadeth all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth."[5]

In addition to accepting the authority of a Prophet of God, belief in which is dying out all over the world, man has throughout history turned to the forms of creation in order to gain knowledge that would in some degree satisfy his curiosity and desire. He has watched reaction to environment, tried to uncover the hidden springs of inheritance, motivation and control and sought to bring to light the secrets of cosmic space. In so doing he has found that no part of the universe lacks evidence of reality, a reality that Bahá'u'lláh terms the signs of the revelation of God within it, signs that have been too difficult to read.

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork," sang the ancient Psalmist.

"Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell
yon rising sun
Earth, with her thousand
voices, praises God."

wrote Coleridge in a moment of inspiration.

"How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop!" exclaims Bahá'u'lláh. "To a supreme degree is this true of man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and

4—Gleanings, p. 318.
5—p. 5.

names of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed. . . . And of all men, the most accomplished, the most distinguished and the most excellent are the Manifestations of the Sun of Truth. Nay, all else besides these Manifestations, live by the operation of their Will, and move and have their being through the outpourings of their grace. . . . These Tabernacles of holiness, these primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles. By the revelation of these gems of divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty and grace, are made manifest."[6]

It was Philip who said unto Jesus: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."[7]

Realization that in the phenomenal world, or even in the world of the human soul, only a fragmentary knowledge of God can be attained, need not, as Jesus indicated, as Bahá'u'lláh explains, keep the searching soul from knowledge of the Creator, who is also Educator and Sovereign of the universe.

But even then Knowledge gained through a Manifestation of God must come to each soul through the faculties with which it is gifted. Those faculties, whether employed to unravel truth concerning man, atom, or the God of all creation, are by nature circumscribed, limited to an understanding of outer expressions, not of essence. Education, therefore, must be in terms of revelation, that is in terms of a manifestation of inherent qualities. Regardless of how much effort man puts forth to find the Light, God though very near, will be forever "sanctified from the comprehension of minds."[8] Impersonality, absoluteness, infinity, purity,—words by which we refer to Divinity,—are meaningless to man. Love, beauty, remain abstract and unknown until the effects are to be observed objectively or experienced subjectively. They have no reality for man except in expression of their quality in creation. The essential purpose for which the Divine Manifestations of the Eternal Essence are sent to earth at appointed times as Ambassadors is that they are able to appear as perfect Mirrors reflecting the Spirit of God in a comprehensible expression of attributes. These Prophets are educators of humanity, qualified by their station of intrinsic and all-embracing knowledge derived from God Himself to understand the essence and relationship of all created things, to see the exact needs of man and to mirror forth God's Will to all men when they appear for earth as teachers in the vestment of personality. The

6—Kitabi-Iqán, pp. 101-103.
7—John, 14:8-10.
8—Bahá'í Scriptures, par. 921.

attributes of perfection, with which their spiritual station is endowed, are co-equal with Divinity, but the body and the mind through which they function translate the meaning in terms of personality that humanity may understand. Lesser men, men of the creational level, finding these qualities attractive may take them unto their own personalities.

"The purpose of the one true God in Manifesting Himself is to summon all mankind to truthfulness and sincerity, to piety and trustworthiness, to resignation and submissiveness to the Will of God, to forbearance and kindliness, to uprightness and wisdom," Bahá'u'lláh proclaims. "His object is to array every man with the mantle of a saintly character, and to adorn him with the ornament of holy and goodly deeds."[9]

ONE station of the Manifestations of God, who are not incarnations of the Primal Essence, but Exponents of Divine Attributes, is that of individuality and of special mission, ordained in accordance with the limitations of humanity in the era of particular Revelation. The other station is that of inner reality, "pure abstraction and essential unity," in which all Manifestations are one and the same. Each is a "return" of the Ones before Him. From a complete understanding of this primal aspect of Manifestation the human soul is barred, for this is the realm of Perfection, though it be in manifestation of Essence.

The Prophets of this Day, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, have made no claim to a station of Divinity in any way surpassing the station of Christ or Muhammad, but they have revealed that their duty of Messengership, the work of educating humanity for spiritual living, is of greater import. Bahá'u'lláh's Day of Revelation and regeneration, heralded by the Báb, and foretold by Prophets of preceding cycles, is unique in that the Prophetic march of man's progress from Adam has ended, his time of spiritual birth (as a race) is at hand, the Eternal Truth has now come. The Father is manifest to establish a social order in which the glory of moral and spiritual obedience is a universal reality. The latent energies of the Ancient Word of God are being revealed to men's eyes in the greatest fulness possible for the comprehension of men of earth at any time.

Divine bounties are perpetual, whether phenomenal or spiritual. The education of men has never been neglected by God, although there are seasons in the movements of progress when the outpouring from on high is greater than during the intervening periods because of the increased receptibilities of men. These days of greatest bounty are those associated directly with the Manifestation of a Prophet on earth. But since the time of the first creation, the motive of which, states Bahá'u'lláh, was that God loved the reality of mankind, God has directed the course of evolution through physical, mental and spiritual growth that ultimately men might be prepared for illumination by those names and attributes which reflect His Truth. He alone is the Divine Educator.

9—Gleanings, p. 299.

THE CULTURAL UNITY OF THE EAST

V. B. METTA

ASIA is one, in spite of the different races which inhabit it, and the different languages which these speak. Race differences do not matter much after all, whether in Europe or Asia, because they do not prevent peoples of different races from learning from each other. The Teuton learnt a good deal from the Latin, and Slav from the Greek in the West, and so in the East, the Indian learnt a good deal from the Mongol, the Chinese from the Hindu, and the Persian from the Arab. Aryan and Semitic and Mongolian are very often mere words that are distinctions without differences. Even in the matter of the difference of languages, Asia is in nowise worse off than Europe. There is almost as great a difference between Russian and Celtic, Hungarian and Spanish as there is between Chinese and Arabic. Just as there is in Europe a grouping of languages into the Latin stock, the Teutonic stock, and so on, so we might put the Chinese, Japanese, and other non-alphabetic languages in one group, the Aryan languages in another group, and the Semitic languages in a third group. These different linguistic groups tend to merge into one another on account of the large number of words which they have borrowed from each other: there are many words of Sanskrit origin in Chinese and Japanese, and Arabic words in Persian and Indian languages. There is the same mixture ethnologically. The Semite and the Mongolian united with the Aryan in India and Persia, and the Semite united with the Aryan and Mongol in Turkey.

Recent excavations in Sind show that there was constant intercourse between India and Mesopotamia in the early times. To what extent the Babylonian and Indian civilizations influenced each other, we do not know definitely yet: but among the things that we do know, is that Roman, the Babylonian god of rains and thunder, is very much like the Hindu Indra, while the Babylonian Fire-god resembles the Hindu Agni. Then again, the Babylonian creation-epic tells us that in the beginning, all was water, which the Hindu creation-epic also tells us. In Astronomy, there are good reasons for believing that the Hindus derived their knowledge of the twenty-seven constellations (Nakshatras) or mansions into which the moon's orbit is divided, from the Assyrians, another Semitic nation. The Assyrian architecture also influenced Indian architecture to a certain extent. There must have been a good

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deal of intercourse between Indians and Persians after they separated from their original Central Asian home. It has been proved that Persian architects and engineers were employed by the Mauryan Emperors of India. Other details of the influence which the two countries exercised on each other are not definitely known yet.

It is also probable that there was a good deal of exchange of ideas between India and the Mongolian East in early times. But in this as in other cases, we have not got sufficient facts to prove our theory. When we come to the Buddhist times, however, we are on firmer ground. In 67 A. C. the Emperor Ming Ti of China received Kashyapamdanya from India who bore with him presents of images and sculptures for him. Since then, the intercourse between the two countries continued uninterrupted till at least the eighth century. During this time, it is estimated that between thirty to forty Chinese scholars came to India, and took back with them to their country, Indian books, paintings and statues.

The influence of India on China can be traced in music, architecture, painting, sculpture, literature, mythology, philosophy and science.

We learn from Chinese writers that Indian music had displaced Chinese music in the seventh century in in Northern China: records of this music are said to be preserved in Japan. Although Chinese architecture is mainly wooden, still Indian architecture has succeeded in influencing it. There were certain temples built during the Tang Period in China, which were the offspring of the union of Indian and Chinese styles of architecture. Those temples are, however, in ruins now, and so they cannot be studied properly. But the Chinese pagoda fortunately still exists. It is called "Chinese," though the country of its origin was Nepal. The Newars, a people living in the Valley of Nepal, evolved it by making certain alterations in the Hindu temple. These alterations were: (1) they built the pagoda on a platform and not on the ground direct like the Hindu temple; (2) they tilted up the roof of their building, mainly because the rainfall in the country is very heavy. Mr. E. B. Havell is of opinion that the pagoda was a modification of the stupa, while M. Sylvain Levi thinks that it represents an Indian style of architecture which has now disappeared. When the pagoda went from Nepal to Tibet and thence to China is not definitely known yet: the oldest pagoda to be found in China today is, I think, of the sixth century.

In painting, India influenced China considerably. From the East China dynasty to the Tang dynasty there was continuous intercourse between the two countries; and Indian paintings went to China in great numbers and influenced, if not actually displaced for a time, Chinese painting in the North. This Indian School of Painting flourished in China till the rise to power of the Southern Sungs, who favored the purely Chinese style of painting.

A Chinese writer tells us that, before the introduction of Buddhism, there was no sculpture in three di-

mensions in China. But most of the early Chinese Buddhist sculpture was destroyed by an emperor who did not like Buddhism. There are, however, the rock sculptures and reliefs at Lo Yang and Lung Men of that period still left intact which show the influence of Indian sculpture on them. There are also sculptures to be found at Yung Kwang which closely resemble the Indo-Greek sculptures of Gandhara.

The Sanskrit language and literature have influenced China to a certain extent, since the Buddhist Scriptures had to be translated into Chinese. On account of the study of Sanskrit, which, by the way, is the language of Mahayana Buddhism and not Pali as some people imagine, the Chinese were inspired to invent an alphabetical system. This alphabetical system, which has now disappeared, was called Balamen Shu or Brahminical writings. Sakuntala, the master-piece of the great Indian dramatist Kalidasa, was translated into Chinese, and is said to have influenced the Chinese drama. In mythology, many Buddhist deities of India were adopted by the Chinese; for example, Kwan Yin, the Chinese Goddess of Mercy, was the Indian Tara. It has been suggested that Lao Tze got his idea of Tao from the Indian Brahman, Universal Soul. It is likely that the Indian sciences of Astronomy and Medicine influenced the astronomical and medical sciences of the Chinese.

India also influenced Japan by way of Korea. The Japanese monks and the Indian sanyasins are more or less alike in spirit. The *bushido* of a Japanese Samurai and the *dharma* of an Indian Kshatriya are practically the same. The temples at Nikko bear unmistakable traces of Indian influence. The frescoes in the Horiuji temple near Nara are painted in the Indian style of painting; they were either painted by Indian artists, or by Korean artists who had learnt their *metier* from the Indians. The Jodo sect of Japanese Buddhism is akin in spirit to Indian Vaishnavism. The bugaku music of Japan resembles Indian music. Indian deities like Kali, Saraswati, Ganesh, etc., went over to Japan in about the ninth century, and were incorporated by the Japanese in their pantheon.

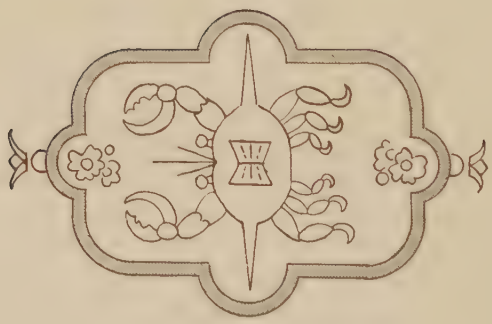
India also influenced the countries that lie between her and China, that is, Burma, Tibet, Cambodia, Siam, Khotan, Ceylon, and Java. Traces of the influence of Indian architecture, mythology, epics, painting, sculpture, dancing, etc., can be seen wherever you go in those countries.

Now we come to Islamic culture, the last great culture that Asia has produced. With their unparalleled valor, the Arabs combined great intellectual and imaginative powers. They learnt zealously all that the other races of the world had to teach them, and then created a grand synthesis out of what they had learnt. There has never been a more eclectic people than the Arabs, a fact which shows that the Moslems were not intolerant and bigoted as their enemies make them out to be. The Astronomy and Mathematics of the Indians and the Greeks, the medical science of India, China, and Greece, the philosophy of the Indians, the Persians,

and the Greeks were taught in the schools of Baghdad and Cordova. In Persia, almost a new nation was created by the fusion of the Aryan and the Semite. Persian was used by the Great Moghuls (a Mongol people who took Perso-Arabic culture to Aryan India with them.) as their court-language and consequently almost every vernacular language of the country borrowed words from it. Hindu poets were also influenced by the Sufi poets of Persia. Faizi, the brother of the great Abul Fazl, translated Sanskrit books into Persian. Akbar welcomed at his Court, Brahmins, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Jains and Christians with equal cordiality. The fine and industrial arts of Central Asia were also introduced into India by the Moslems: and they influenced and were influenced in their turn by Hindu arts. Sufism also travelled westward as far as Constantinople, with the result that almost all the great poets of Turkey till the middle of the last century were Sufis.

Finally, a reference to the influence of Chinese art on Persian art and of Arabic art on Chinese art might be made. You see Chinese clouds in many a Persian miniature, and Arabic scrolls have been found on early Chinese porcelain.*

*Reprinted from Indian Review, Calcutta.



THE TYPES OF CHARACTER

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

Question.—How many kinds of character has man? and what is the cause of the differences and varieties in men?

Answer.—He has the innate character, the inherited character, and the acquired character which is gained by education.

WITH regard to the innate character, although the divine creation is purely good, yet the varieties of natural qualities in man come from the difference of degree; all are excellent, but they are more or less so, according to the degree. So all mankind possess intelligence and capacities, but the intelligence, the capacity, and the worthiness of men differ. This is evident.

For example, take a number of children of one family, of one place, of one school, instructed by one teacher, reared on the same food, in the same climate, with the same clothing, and studying the same lessons—it is certain that among these children some will be clever in the sciences, some will be of average ability and some dull. Hence it is clear that in the original nature there exists a difference of degree, and varieties of worthiness and capacity. This difference does not imply good or evil, but is simply a difference of degree. One has the highest degree, another the medium degree, and another the lowest degree. So man exists, the animal, the plant, and the mineral exist also—but the degrees of these four existences vary. What a difference between the existence of man and of the animal! Yet both are existences. It is evident that in existence there are differences of degrees.

The variety of inherited qualities comes from strength and weakness of constitution; that is to say when the two parents are weak, the children will be weak; if they are strong, the children will be robust. In the same way, purity of blood has a great effect; for the pure germ is like the superior stock which exists in plants and animals. For example, you see that children born from a weak and feeble father and mother will naturally have a feeble constitution and weak nerves; they will be afflicted, and will have neither patience, nor endurance, nor resolution, nor perseverance, and will be hasty; for the children inherit the weakness and debility of their parents.

Besides this, an especial blessing is conferred on some families and some generations. Thus it is an especial blessing that from among the descendants of Abraham should have come all the Prophets of the children

of Israel. This is a blessing that God has granted to this descent: to Moses from his father and mother, to Christ from his mother's line; also to Muhammad and the Báb, and to all the Prophets and the Holy Manifestations of Israel.

Hence it is evident that inherited character also exists, and to such a degree that if the characters are not in conformity with their origin, although they belong physically to that lineage, spiritually they are not considered members of the family; like Canaan, who is not reckoned as being of the race of Noah.

But the difference of the qualities with regard to culture is very great; for education has great influence. Through education the ignorant become learned, the cowardly become valiant; through cultivation the crooked branch becomes straight, the acid, bitter fruit of the mountains and woods becomes sweet and delicious, and the five-petalled flower becomes hundred-petalled. Through education savage nations become civilized, and even the animals become domesticated. Education must be considered as most important; for as diseases in the world of bodies are extremely contagious, so, in the same way, qualities of spirit and heart are extremely contagious. Education has a universal influence and the differences caused by it are very great.

Perhaps some one will say, that since the capacity and worthiness of men differ, therefore the difference of capacity certainly causes the difference of characters.

But this is not so; for capacity is of two kinds, natural capacity and acquired capacity. The first, which is the creation of God, is purely good —in the creation of God there is no evil; but the acquired capacity has become the cause of the appearance of evil. For example, God has created all men in such a manner, and has given them such a constitution and such capacities, that they are benefited by sugar and honey, and harmed and destroyed by poison. This nature and constitution is innate, and God has given it equally to all mankind. But man begins little by little to accustom himself to poison, by taking a small quantity each day, and gradually increasing it, until he reaches such a point that he cannot live without a gramme of opium every day. The natural capacities are thus completely perverted. Observe how much the natural capacity and constitution can be changed, until by different habits and training they become entirely perverted. One does not criticize vicious people because of their innate capacities and nature, but rather for their acquired capacities and nature.

In creation there is no evil; all is good. Certain qualities and natures innate in some men and apparently blameworthy are not so in reality. For example, from the beginning of his life you can see in a nursing child the signs of desire, of anger, and of temper. Then, it may be said, good and evil are innate in the reality of man, and this is contrary to the pure goodness of nature and creation. The answer to this is that desire, which is to ask for something more, is a praiseworthy quality provided that it is used suitably. So, if a man has the

desire to acquire science and knowledge, or to become compassionate, generous, and just, it is most praiseworthy. If he exercises his anger and wrath against the bloodthirsty tyrants who are like ferocious beasts, it is very praiseworthy; but if he does not use these qualities in a right way, they are blameworthy.

Then it is evident that in creation and nature evil does not exist at all; but when the natural qualities of man are used in an unlawful way, they are blameworthy. So, if a rich and generous person gives a sum of money to a poor man for his own necessities, and if the poor man spends that sum of money on unlawful things, that will be blameworthy. It is the same with all the natural qualities of man, which constitute the capital of life; if they be used and displayed in an unlawful way, they become blameworthy. Therefore it is clear that creation is purely good. Consider that the worst of qualities and most odious of attributes, which is the foundation of all evil, is lying. No worse or more blameworthy quality than this can be imagined to exist; it is the destroyer of all human perfections, and the cause of innumerable vices. There is no worse characteristic than this; it is the foundation of all evils. Notwithstanding all this, if a doctor consoles a sick man by saying: 'Thank God you are better, and there is hope of your recovery,' though these words are contrary to the truth, yet they may become the consolation of the patient and the turning-point of the illness. This is not blameworthy.

This question is now clearly elucidated. Salutations!

THE NEW FRONTIER OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

RALPH TYLER FLEWELLING

SOME years ago, Spengler in his work entitled *The Decline of the West,* indicated what he calls "sense of destiny" as the motivating spirit of the West. If that interpretation is true it would be interesting to discover how this sense of destiny arose and to trace its historical development. We might easily picture to ourselves the parting of the Orient from the Occident on the central Asian plain before the dawn of history. One branch of the human family would be visualized as separating to the east and destined soon to be stopped by the impassible ocean, to settle down and form the intensive culture of China. The other branch faced west and had no insuperable barriers to stop it until it reached the Atlantic. Once there and before there was fully time to conquer the wilderness and begin an intensive culture, the mariner's compass, enlarged ships, and Chinese silks set it on a new trek westward before the old wander-lust could die away. The early nomads had flung out wide advance guards of horsemen who became the terror successively of the settled peoples of western Asia and Europe. The carts, carrying wives and children, stock and impedimenta, brought up the rear. Wherever these delayed was, for the time being, home, and the rallying point of the tribe in seasons of peace. One of the strangest parallels of history was the similarity of these first migrations to the last; the Mongol carts to the prairie schooners that crossed the American mountains and desert. To the men whose faces were set in the one direction, the desired conditions of life were just one more trek across the ranges or the plains. Happiness, wealth, freedom, were just a little farther West and men began to look upon themselves and their race as having a "destiny" to conquer the remaining wilderness of the earth.

More than "sense of destiny" even, the whole movement tended to cultivate individual initiative. What one acquired of individual fortune in the new land of pilgrimage was largely dependent upon one's own exertion. The Occidental, in addition to becoming a predestinarian became also an individualist. This outlook began to express itself in his philosophy with the dawn of written language. As his philosophy developed into science, it dictated that the method of science should be individualistic, that is, a method of analysis. Since his tribal and national existence had been conceived as composed of individuals,

so he thought of reality as made up of ever more and more separable particles, until he reached at last the indivisible atom. His was a long experiment in analysis, in individuation, in extension. His mathematics became that of a straight line infinitely divisible.

A CONTRASTING development took place in the Orient. Here the migrations soon came to the end of the trail. Successive influxes could only settle down upon, overlap the previous ones. The land was early cultivated to the utmost limits of arability to provide the common living. China was seemingly the most fertile spot on the face of the earth, and few were willing to take the backward track to plateau and desert. People were forced to live in close proximity. Both farming and living had to become intensive. The individual could subsist only as he fitted himself into the close-knit fabric of society. The very segregation intensified the family relationship. To assert individuality in any drastic way was to put one's self on the outside, to cut himself off from support, to become an outcast. Nowhere except in the Orient has such a premium been put upon conformity with one's environment. It had certain advantages as well as certain disadvantages. While it built up a certain imperviousness to new ideas, yet it was useful in the preservation of the established order, and offered a defence not only against revolutionary notions, but also by a strange paradox against foreign amalgamation. Invaders were, by force of circumstance, compelled to sink into the common picture or perish. Thus there arose in the East, the most intensive and the most enduring of world civilizations.

The Westerner has been more than an individualist. He has also been a life-long spendthrift. That human trait which early brought the Eastern branch to the end of its resources and compelled conservation, went on unchecked in the West for centuries. He began by destroying the forests with ax and fire. What matter! Were there not untold forests still unburned? Myself as a boy saw what would now be priceless tracts of hardwood rolled in to great heaps as large as houses and destroyed: maple, oak, walnut: nothing was saved except pine, and that was slaughtered, only the straightest and largest being used. This was done in a frenzied attempt to clear the land for a few crops of wheat that flourished for a limited time, until the virgin soil was exhausted. We have been such spendthrifts of soil that the United States' government has recently suggested the turning of great areas of former rich tillage back to the desert as insufficient to support even a sparse population. We have ripped open the bowels of the earth like pillages, to appropriate the last treasure there, in sublime indifference to coming generations, or the future of society. We are now wastefully depleting our resources of oil, with no respect for the common good, the national defence, or anything but private gain.

Unfortunately, for a race so constituted, with such an economy, the days of exploitation are ended. The world is now so narrowed that our

wild nomad feet must halt. We are now obliged to learn the lesson that China has been tutored in for four thousand years, or else resort to some higher as yet untried expedient. The early backwash of Chinese migration turned the whole effort toward the internal relations. It focussed the attention of the individual upon the immediate surroundings in which he found himself, those that were necessary for his own survival in a crowded state of society. These were the associations of the family and the village and so intense was the struggle that great masses of men could not look beyond these simpler relations. . . . But it taught the Oriental, social economy, the indissoluble nature of human relationships, thrift, the conservation of food, and of soil, qualities of the utmost moment in an overcrowded world. Furthermore, the individual in such a world could only come to think of himself in the light of social wants, his family, his village which in many cases was but a larger family. Herein must he find his own success, his own rise or fall. His world was an organism. His theory of knowledge was to learn the facts by studying the relationships of an organism. Instead of analysis his method was one of synthesis and intuition.

Both cultures, East and West, seem now to be brought to an awkward pause; the East by the impossibility of adjusting her conservatism to the new social order of a machine age produced by the West; the West by the ending of her frontier. As with the East, so with the West, the problem that now faces us is essentially different from any other we have had. For centuries the Western world has been accustomed to make its social adjustments by the trek westward. Instead of staying to reform the old order, dissatisfied sections of society have moved westward to new spaces to found a social order according to their own desires and ideals. These have been the radicals, and have continually drawn off from the civilization they left behind, the most progressive elements; leaving behind the conservatives to enjoy their conservatism and the slower pace of a more gradual development. There are now no waste places to which the radicals can resort, or whose less luxurious wilderness appeals. Social readjustment by expansion westward is no longer possible. Hence the West has now put upon it to face the strain of an internal adjustment that is foreign to its genius and previous training. The ending of her frontier presents a grave dilemma, her long-pursued trail away from her ancient home in the Orient has unceremoniously ended in the backyard of the place from which she started.

The confusion of the present time in both East and West, is due to the discovery that the contradictory principles which each has assumed as unquestioned have been found inadequate for the world as now constituted. In the embarrassing crisis neither can appeal the decisions that are thrust upon them, to the court of history. The problems are essentially new and different. The new demand of the new world we face cannot be settled by the Eastern method of intension, nor can it be blundered into

by the blind individualism of the West whose method is to shift to new fields of exploitation. The demand is now made directly to the native capacity of men's souls. It calls for a spiritual power and a moral independence of which neither East nor West seem at the present moment capable.

THE MELTING POT OF MODERN IDEAS

There have been various contacts between East and West in the course of history and none of them have been without far-reaching results. It has been customary in the West to overlook these influences or to minimize their importance. The early trade contacts rather naturally typified for us under the name of Marco Polo brought new ideas of luxury and refinement to a coarse and brutal age in Europe, had not a little to do with the development of European craftsmanship and the rise of the free cities, and provided the stimulus that sent forth Columbus and the great sea-captains.

Again in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, as the result of letters from the Jesuit missionaries who had been received by the Chinese in friendly spirit, there arose consequences of the utmost importance to European thought and social theory. Knowledge of Chinese philosophy, political economy, art and architecture was among Europeans most elementary, and suffered from the half-informed intelligence of those who communicated it to their western friends. The fact that the knowledge was partial, illy digested, or even perverted, did not however prevent Europe of that time from going "China crazy." The casting of new and contrasting ideas into the European maelstrom set up a violent ebullition, which released the forces of revolution and served to illustrate the iconoclastic power of ideas.

Knowledge of the long and verified history of China upset the accepted chronology of the Bible, cast doubt upon its strictly historical character, raised the concept of a pre-Adamic race, riddled the notion of a revealed religion, and erected the Deistic theory of natural religion. The Confucian idea of an Emperor who was conceived as the Father of his people was appealed to for the purpose of fastening more firmly upon the masses the principle of autocracy and to bolster the fading tyrannies of Europe. Theories of political economy, financial and education as well as of a nationalized state church were profoundly modified. Laotzean *ataraxia* was molded into the *laissez faire* political philosophy of Bentham, Mill and Adam Smith. The use of paper money as legal tender, and the imposition of land taxes seem to have been by-products of this contact. The Laotzean view of nature reappears in the Rousseauan doctrine of education, and the concept held in Europe of the democratic character of Chinese education, taken up by Turgot and Condorcet may have been the beginning of popular education and of the state schools destined to be worked out in France and in America. In art and architecture the result of the Chinese impact was yet more fantastic. More in architecture and furniture than in art, because in the for-

mer there was less opportunity to learn from the original. The result was the unspeakable and hybrid rococo. All of these movements were in some sense a perversion of Chinese ideas. They were adopted without thought or knowledge of the underlying philosophy and the conditions which had produced them. Great good undoubtedly resulted from the liberation in Europe of new intellectual concepts, but the result was distortion and it did not really add to the understanding of a great people. In many ways the misunderstanding of essential principles led to excess and monstrosity and to a one-sided political economy.

We are now at the beginning of another movement arising out of the contact of East with West. It may seem strange to some that Captain Dollar should be here hailed as the herald of a new movement in civilization. When he established an Asiatic fleet and persuaded the West to visit the East in hordes, he became the agent of vaster social and political changes than he could possibly have known. As a result we are now due for another strong attack of 'Asiatic fever,' at the very moment that China and the whole Orient is struggling with the virus of Western ideas. It amounts to world-wide political and social disease.

Reichwein[1] raises the question whether this new movement is destined to reveal to the West its own decadence and lead it back to its own sources or to an entire spiritual readjustment. We might go further and profitably inquire whether this new knowledge of China is to be as superficially misleading as the old. Three days in Peking, two in Shanghai, and one in Hong Kong, without a bit of preliminary reading in Chinese history, philosophy or literature, and with no knowledge at all of its art, would seem to be an insecure basis on which to return home and lecture to scores of Women's Clubs, Rotarians, Elks, Lions, Eagles and Moose, to say nothing of College audiences, on "What I know about China at first hand." Ridiculous as this sounds it represents the fact in the case, and versions due to partial understandings, misinterpretations that make those of the first missionaries pale into insignificance.

Nor is one always likely to be better served by many who boast a "fifteen or twenty years" residence, and who therefore assume a complete knowledge of Chinese culture, based on nothing deeper than the transactions of the street, and the casual meetings of business, without any attention to an extensive culture knowledge of which is the result of exacting toil. Impressions arising from such sources as these never get past the repulsions of strange ways of doing things, and usually dwell with ridicule upon differences of social custom as if they were matters of prime importance. Social custom has a meaning that becomes rational only when one understands the underlying philosophy, the social concepts, from which it springs. All peoples, East as well as West love to prove the superiority of their own civilization by citing the strange doings of other people. The method is cheap and pleasing to vanity, but it is a menace to

1—China and Europe, p. 3.

international peace.

Similar questions might be raised on the other side. What is China going to get out of this new contact with the West? Will it likewise lead her to a revaluation of the sources of her own power, that old, fine moral integrity and spiritual resource which has made the best of her civilization, or will she be led to despise these, while she takes on the mechanical veneer of our western culture, and comes to worship that as progress? Will she accept our machinery, our publicity methods, our scientific achievement, with no thought of the spiritual, the creative sources from which they have sprung? If she does she is sure to have a confused result in her national life similar to that which produced among us an architecture that was neither Chinese nor Gothic but a mess, and a political economy that has led us in a hundred and fifty years to the precipice of industrial collapse.

Already certain forces are at work in Western society that bear strange likeness to things Chinese, and which are yet not Chinese but perversion due to partial understandings. Yet these might be salutary forces, being deeply needed in our Western life if only truly known and evaluated. The tendency of the hour is strongly set toward the nature philosophy of Taoism though quite unconscious of such relationship. Such tendencies are to be noted in the work of Dostoievsky with his philosophy of irrationalism. This irrationalism is now strong in Western life and is a natural reaction from the mechanistic influences which have so long held us in bonds. It is a call for the return to nature, and has become the underlying philosophy of such movements as the youth movement. On one side it leans toward a skepticism of all established forms, conventions and moralities. On the other side it gives over individual judgment, reason, and the rational solution of troublesome questionings to be lost in mystical experience as illustrated in the Barthian and Oxford groups. On both hands it emphasizes the irrational, and overlooks the value of mental discipline and its place in the religious life. In the West it is a weakness, for in the main, it represents despair of all reasonable solutions.

These days of new acquaintance between East and West are fraught with weal or woe for the future. If they bring to both East and West a better knowledge of themselves and of spiritual sources of their respective greatness, then out of the contact may arise a new civilization better than the world has ever before known. If the coming years bring no profounder understanding of ourselves or of each other, then we are headed for destruction.

THE NEW FRONTIER

How shall this new and needed understanding be brought about and what shall become the formula of amalgamation between East and West? The understanding can come only with the knowledge of the basic philosophy out of which each civilization has arisen. Otherwise the new contacts will reproduce in spirit some-

thing of the results of the old like the rococo. In spite of the excellencies arising out of the shock of new ideas, there is need for the profounder knowledge of underlying philosophies. A civilization is never known apart from the thought system which has made it. China is something more than dragons and pagodas, insensibility of which led Europe into systems bizarre and monstrous, while on the other hand, Western civilization is something more than the manipulation of cleverly designed machinery for creation or destruction.

The individualism of the West and the syncretism of the East have been brought to pause. Neither can go on by itself alone. Each possesses what is of value to the other, but the faults of one do not cancel out the faults of the other. Mere coalescence means magnification of weaknesses. Both have failed in realizing the fulness of the individual. Both have failed to bring to full flower and bloom the greatness of the human spirit. The civilization of tomorrow holds this as the dearest promise and possession of whatever culture shall succeed the present. Anything less will be failure.

As it has been said of Manhattan Island, that when by reason of restricted space, men could no longer spread out their temples of commerce, they were compelled to build into the air, and so evolved the skyscraper, so today we must build our civilization up. Our narrowed world of easy communication and sensitive nerves, of shrunken frontiers and floating fortresses, demands that we shall rise above the commercial and the mercenary to a concept of world justice and universal opportunity. The whole problem of civilization must be lifted to a new plane of strategy and endeavor.

An American statesman has recently been reported as asking: "What values shall we choose, those of today . . . or the unplumbed future, trackless as the sea?" I fear he did not mean to return the same answer to his question as the writer, and that he was moved in the thought of the future by the spirit of fear. The only possibility of conserving any values of today is by carrying them on to something better. Present good, like the manna of the Israelites, soon rots if one attempts to conserve it. There is no good except a growing, readapting, living good that fears no future but marches abreast of the progress of mankind and welcomes the daily test of contact with the world of life and movement. Time will not stay for us; we are being hurried along to the decisions of tomorrow whether we wish it or not. We must meet these decisions not with some old good but with the new application of the best principles we can summon to our aid. As for me give me the unplumbed future, trackless as the sea, for on that sea we must achieve something better than the good of today or all is lost.

The civilization of tomorrow cannot remain solely upon the economic basis which is chiefly characterized by war; war for bread, captained by men who see the battle from afar, and who dispose of the forces of life and of death as from another world, for man cannot live by bread alone. The rank and file must not only have

bread, they must in addition to the bread have also some food for the spirit. We must go on our search of the frontier of the spirit, of social need and obligation. We must have a mind for the cultivation of the soul, for the development of the higher arts, for the encouragement of genius, for a new sensitiveness toward moral responsibility, for the increase of individual opportunity to achieve the highest. Principally because it has failed to achieve these things must the old home be forsaken for the new frontier. This is the frontier whose fertile fields lie yet untilled before us; her forests are as yet unsubdued; within her boundaries stalk the wild beasts of avarice and lust and hate which must be overcome.*

*Reprint from Chinese Social and Political Science Review, Shanghai.

A YAWNING gulf threatens to involve in one common disaster both the satisfied and dissatisfied nations, democracies and dictatorships, capitalists and wage-earners, Europeans and Asiatics, Jew and Gentile, white and colored. An angry Providence, the cynic might well observe, has abandoned a hapless planet to its fate, and fixed irrevocably its doom. Sore-tried and disillusioned, humanity has no doubt lost its orientation, and would seem to have lost as well its faith and hope. It is hovering, unshepherded and visionless, on the brink of disaster. . . .

And yet, while the shadows are continually deepening, might we not claim that gleams of hope, flashing intermittently on the international horizon, appear at times to relieve the darkness that encircles humanity? Would it be untrue to maintain that in a world of unsettled faith and disturbed thought, a world of steadily mounting armaments, of unquenched hatreds and rivalries, the progress, however fitful, of the forces working in harmony with the spirit of the age can already be discerned? Though the great outcry raised by post-war nationalism is growing louder and more insistent every day, the League of Nations is yet in its embryonic state, and the storm clouds that are gathering may for a time totally eclipse its powers and obliterate its machinery, yet the direction in which the institution itself is operating is most significant. . . .

That no less than fifty nations of the world, all members of the League of Nations, should have, after mature deliberation, recognized and been led to pronounce their verdict against an act of aggression which in their judgment has been deliberately pronounced by one of their fellow-members, one of the foremost Powers of Europe; that they should have, for the most part, agreed to impose collectively sanctions on the condemned aggressor, and should have succeeded in carrying out, to a very great measure, their decision, is no doubt an event without parallel in human history. For the first time in the history of humanity the system of collective security, foreshadowed by Bahá'u'lláh and explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, has been seriously envisaged, discussed and tested.—SHOGHI EFFENDI.

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REVELATION

BERTHA HYDE KIRKPATRICK

"ANOTHER revelation!" Thus remarked a woman of good intelligence who had just listened for the first time to a Bahá'í talk. She turned away in evident despair.

But what is meant by revelation?

There are, truly, many today who are claiming to have received a revelation. Of these recipients, some feel that it is simply for their own guidance, others feel that they have received something which they should give to the world. It would be impossible to accept and follow all such revelations because they do not agree with each other, indeed impossible to thoroughly investigate all. And yet by failing to investigate we may miss finding the Eternal Truth and the Divine Remedy for the troubled world.

In a certain sense all new knowledge comes to us by revelation. The scientist or inventor ponders over a knotty problem, and suddenly, perhaps when thinking about something else, the flash of illumination comes. The artist is impelled by an inner urge to express on canvas his vision of truth and beauty, and the musician to translate some great emotional experience into harmonious sound. The seer, prophet or poet looks into the future and sees a world wherein righteousness and justice reign.

But all these are limited by the capacity of the person to whom the revelation comes. The thing revealed is not necessarily truth and may even lead people astray. Bahá'u'lláh uses the illustration of different colored mirrors to show the limitations of such revelation: "It's (the Sun of Truth's) manifestation is ever according to the capacity and coloring of the mirror through which it may reflect. For example: Its light, when cast on the mirrors of the wise, gives expression of wisdom; when reflected from the minds of artists, it produces manifestations of new and beautiful arts; when it shines through the eyes of students, it reveals knowledge and unfolds mysteries." (Words of Wisdom.)

But Divine Revelation is different. This comes only at long intervals (about 1000 years). The object and effect is to regenerate and unite men through spiritual rebirth. The result is action, not mere words, and is very far-reaching. Divine Revelation comes through a Being who outwardly is a man like ourselves, but proves Himself, though unschooled, to answer the most difficult questions and to endure all hardships and persecutions. For always injustice is meted out to Him by mankind. This pure Channel

and great Revealer is known as the Manifestation of God because He is like a perfect mirror reflecting all the powers and attributes of God, consequently His words possess all wisdom and are creative. His spiritual power so energizes, that first individual souls are reborn and gradually a new civilization grows up. Jesus Christ was such a Manifestation of God. There have been many others—Moses, Muhammad and Buddha are examples. They all claimed direct communication from God. All neither gained nor asked earthly glory.

Divine Revelation is progressive. Each successive Revealer is able to give more of truth to man because He builds on the foundation already laid by His predecessor.

Does mankind need divine guidance today? No sincere and far-seeing person will deny the need. Then he needs a fresh Divine Revelation.

Bahá'u'lláh has already brought such a revelation. "Before ye call I will answer."

How can we know whether Bahá'u'lláh's revelation is true or just another "revelation" that will gather a few followers and fade away? Study His words. Do they vitalize spiritually? Does he put forth a sane plan to meet the needs of the world today? What effect have His words already had? "By their fruits shall ye know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" "If this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: . . ."

Investigate. Do not pass by the great Message of Bahá'u'lláh because He claims it is revelation. Divine Revelation comes at rare intervals. God seldom thus favors man. And yet His bounty is unceasing.

Ponder Bahá'u'lláh's own words: "That which is pre-eminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual, is subservient unto this. It is, in its essence, and will ever so remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven. It is God's supreme testimony, the clearest evidence of His truth, the sign of His consummate bounty, the token of His all-encompassing mercy, the proof of His most loving providence, the symbol of His most perfect grace. He hath, indeed, partaken of this gift of God who hath recognized His Manifestation in this Day."

THE SEED OF CIVILIZATION

BOOK REVIEW

HELEN INDERLIED

On this phase—Art and Religion—Rudhyar starts with the basic statement of great insight, namely, that "only a *Person* could give expression to an organic Religion or to an organic Art whole."[1] He asserts that everything, be it art, science, religion or what you will, comes through a great Spiritual Person or Prophet or Manifestation of God, who is always acting under the guidance of a New Primal Impulse direct from the Creator.

As that great Being speaks to His first few chosen followers, He energizes them and they become almost identified with Him. They are henceforth known as His disciples. "Without such an intimate group through which His power may radiate and differentiate," Mr. Rudhyar declares, "even the greatest living Man—the most Universal Incarnation of Spirit—is powerless. People are beginning to realize that there is a mysterious virtue in the coming together of a few human beings; that more truth can be reached by ten men than by one man whatever the ten men or the single man are. The group is like an ovum; it needs to be fecundated. The fecundator is always a single Person,—a single vivifying Spirit cell—single not in the sense of being an isolated 'I,' but in the sense of being a Focus of Emanation for the Word of Truth."

As this great Adept or Prophet speaks to the people "we have in Him all the Elements of a poem: tone—action—image, and from this initial Unity arises the multiplicity of the arts. To illustrate, the vibrations of the Prophet's voice revitalize His hearers and furnish tone. The gestures that He uses and the deeds of His life furnish the action. As for the image or form—the form through which the Spirit impulse express itself is the Body of the One Great Person."

"In the course of time when the Prophet has passed away, religious ceremonies become more complex. They require a special location to be performed in. The Vault of the sky is too vast for aesthetical or even religious purposes. The dome of the church feels more comfortable to performances reduced to purely human stage of earthly personality."

"The presence of the Great Person being no longer felt within, men long to see the august features of the departed Prophet. Painting and sculpture develop within the church or temple, or eventually on the walls of the King's palace and ultimately of every little prince's or wealthy mer-

1—The Synthetic Drama As a Seed of Civilization, by Dane Rudhyar.

chant's house." Thus from religious feeling develop *architecture, painting* and *sculpture.*

"As for *drama,* it too begins in religious service." After the Prophet has gone, the Priest theoretically becomes in mass the Channel for the Christ force. Thus the primal impulse of the cycle of Manifestation is revitalized and the hearers and communicants re-energized by the outpouring of Power. As the Priest re-enacts ever repeatedly the passion of Jesus in symbolic ritual.

"We have the beginning of *drama* —seen also—in the Archaic Mysteries when people enact the story of the Soul's incarnation into matter and of its re-ascent into the Spiritual Realms. Later when the mysteries leave the Cathedral or Temple and become Theatrical Dramas, we have secularization."

"*Music* develops from the tones of the inspired Prophet and the chant *Aum* becomes the most sacred incantation of India—a sort of hymn to the Sun in all its aspects."

"So action, tone, image at first united in the Prophet become separated and we have emphasis on technique and form. Mysteries become theatrical dramas. Painting and architecture and sculpture become secularized. Each art, what is more trespasses on the other and seeks to be everything of itself. The part seeks to be the whole. Music loses its words and develops musical 'form' thus drawing from decorative arts and the sense of tone is almost lost. *Painting,* tries to be dramatic and enriched by action evolves a symbolical third dimension. *Sculpture* becomes not only dramatic, but colorful. *Poetry* tends to become music with rhymes, assonances and various rhythmical patterns. Technique is stressed in dancing and the aesthetic rather than the inspirational motive."

"Each art is away from Unity and perverted. A multiplicity of arts follows."

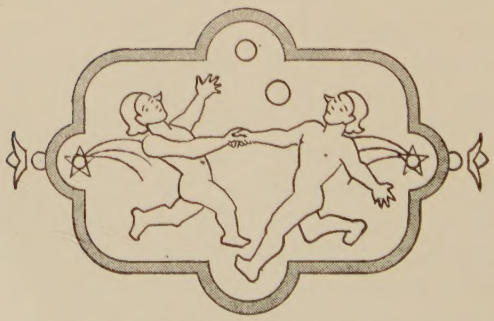
"In order to get back to unity, the many different arts would have to be purified and regenerated. Also these individualistic arts have little chance to become unified until we have individualistic human beings brought together by some communal purpose. For art reflects life. Communal purpose made Gothic Art possible. Christianity kept the European Art whole, unbroken for many centuries. Commercialism has completed the destruction of the spirit of devotion to art. The public comes in search of sensation. The greatest need of a new art is a new public."

"When the artist will feel in himself a new duty—a new responsibility and emerge from the mire of self-complacency and self-indulgence into the trustee-ship of Life-bearer; when a few will gather around him and both they and he will commune in some great spiritual realization, then a sort of Art Brotherhood will be constituted. Such a Brotherhood is the absolutely essential condition for the perfect fulfillment of a true Synthetic Drama. Only if Synthetic Drama it really is, the brotherhood ought to encompass the whole of the Community and eventually the whole of Humanity."

"The Synthetic Drama is thus an

ideal of perfected Humanity; it is the Culmination of Man. And such is very far off indeed. Yet whenever a cycle ends, the urge toward attempting some such Art Synthesis becomes powerfully felt at least by a few. We have to face the duty involved at such an urge."

"LET us state once more that it is our belief that Europe, i. e. Western Europe, has ceased to be the possible soil on which true synthetic attempts can be made. Whether Russia may ever lead parts of Asia toward some such sort of Spiritual Art Synthesis seems rather doubtful. Yet it may well happen and we must take notice of the great Bahá'í Movement, originating in Persia, which may possibly become the world-religion of the coming Era, if certain signs are to be believed in. The Bahá'ís already have begun the erection of a great Temple in Chicago striking in Architecture and in which rituals of a definite Synthetic nature are to be performed in time. It may be that we see there the beginning of a new type of ritual which after many vicissitudes and centuries of development, may lead to a new Art-whole embracing more or less of all humanity. The Spirit of the Bahá'í Movement, proclaimed in 1844 and stated more fully years later, certainly brought out the truths of the coming Era. The history of the Movement presents all the materials required for a world-religion; and the first artistic manifestation of the faith —the Chicago Temple, the model of which was built inspirationally—is certainly a very significant one constituted as it is by an effective synthesis of the most characteristic religious styles of the past."



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Edited by BERTHA HYDE KIRKPATRICK

Peace is something more significant than the mere absence of conflict. A durable peace, one that will resist the onslaught of untoward or temporary circumstances, is something far more positive and constructive. It demands a policy based on positive international cooperation, on mutual confidence and on united effort in the solution of common concern.—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

Whether we like it or not, we live in an age of political and social turmoil. Ominous storm clouds overhang many parts of the world today. We must continually and unremittingly use the full strength of our continental solidarity to advance the cause of peace. If we in the western hemisphere can persevere and succeed, we can make a vitally important contribution.—SECRETARY HULL.

May America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment and all the world receive this heavenly blessing. For America has developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations.—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ.

Their writings (i.e. those of Bahá-'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá) are a great cry toward peace, reaching beyond all limits of frontiers, above all dissensions about rites and dogmas. . . . It is a wondrous message that Bahá-'u'lláh and His son 'Abdu'l-Bahá have given us. They have not set it up aggressively knowing that the germ of eternal truth which lies at its core cannot but take root and spread. —DOWAGER QUEEN MARIE OF ROUMANIA.

The argument still proceeds between the friends of peace who wish the league to keep and to exert its powers to insure collective security and those other friends of peace who have no faith in any such methods, but wish the league to become a society with its one object to provide ways of peace without any recourse to economic or military sanctions.—CHRISTIAN CENTURY.

Be united, O assembly of kings, for by this, the winds of disagreement existing among you will subside, and your subjects and those who are around you will be at rest, were ye of those who know! If a certain one amongst you should rise against the other, arise all of you and oppose him, for this is nought but manifest justice.—BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

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